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For Immediate Release
November 5, 2004

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Sen. Hardiman's bill for health care options passes Senate

LANSING — Sen. Bill Hardiman, R-Kentwood, successfully urged the state Senate to pass legislation providing more flexibility for health maintenance organizations in offering health care benefits. The Senate approved Senate Bill 1150 with a bipartisan vote of 26 to 11 on Thursday.

Hardiman praised the actions of the Senate as a response to the health care needs of individuals and businesses. SB 1150 would allow HMOs more flexibility in offering basic health coverage with lower costs through higher deductibles.

“My hope is that this flexibility in the marketplace will allow some individuals and businesses that do not have any insurance to gain some level of coverage,” Hardiman said. “Maintaining health care coverage and helping the uninsured are major issues confronting the Legislature.”

Hardiman also sponsored SB 1150 because of concerns from west Michigan employers that they could not maintain existing health coverage for employees.

“As health care costs rise, we need to give employers more options in maintaining at least basic coverage rather than dropping insurance altogether,” Hardiman said.

SB 1150 was supported by a number of organizations including the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce. It now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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